

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 7:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Robert Bollengier; Mary Walsh; Frank Maher, and Bill Munroe. Susan DeSack, Chairperson was absent. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley; and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo were present.

ORDER – Vice Chair Cicero called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo read the District Mission Statement.

OPEN FORUM – Superintendent Geismar recognized Director of Special Education Maureen DeCrescenzo. He said that this is Maureen's last School Committee meeting, she has been a mainstay in the district for 19 years, and she will be missed. Members, Administrators, and audience members gave Maureen a standing ovation.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Director of Administration Robert Ross answered Member Bollengier's clarifying questions regarding consent agenda item, C. Bills.

Member Maher requested that consent agenda item, IV. B. 6. Sabbatical, a. be pulled for discussion at the end of the meeting.

Member Munroe requested that Agenda Request Form #0005 (agenda item, V., B. Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Sabbatical Leave) also be pulled for discussion at the end of the meeting.

Clerk Coutcher requested that consent agenda items, B., 1., a. and B., 1., b. be pulled for discussion.

Member Bollengier referenced consent agenda item, A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Minutes of August 7, 2007 (page 5) and requested that the motion he had made relating to the two appointments for Special Education Director and Special Education Assistant Director be corrected to reflect that the two appointments be deferred to the August 21, 2007 School Committee meeting. Consensus of the committee was to have the minutes changed.

Member Maher moved to accept the consent agenda with item(s), B. 1. a. and b.; IV. ., B., 6., Sabbaticals, a. (and agenda request form #0005) pulled. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 – 0.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Minutes of August 7, 2007 (w/corrections); Executive Session Minutes of July 17, 2007; Executive Session Minutes of August 7, 2007

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments – (As recommended by the Superintendent)

a. Item pulled

b. Item pulled

c. Lauren Jannelle as .67 FTE Sr. High School Spanish Teacher, Step 5, B, Salary \$30,007; for 90-days/first semester of the 2007-2008 school year, effective August 28, 2007, contingent upon receipt of Criminal Background Check

d. Paul Santa as Sr. High School Assistant Football Coach, Stipend \$2,402.00; effective for the 2007 – 2008 season

e. Maryhelen Chiulli as .5 FTE Jr. High School Science Teacher, Job Share position, Step 1, B, Salary \$17,324; effective September 28, 2007

2. Leaves of Absence – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

a. Letter from Sharon Lee requesting to remain on School Committee approved unpaid leave for the 2007 – 2008 school year and to change her status from that of a RI Department of Education Fellow to a teacher on leave

3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with regret)

a. Letter of Resignation from Lilyanne Werle from her position as Kindergarten Teacher at Lineham School, effective August 21, 2007

b. Letter of Resignation from Maggie Hayes from her position as .4 FTE Job Share Speech-Language Pathologist at Lineham School, effective August 20, 2007

4. Grievances

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 3

5. Recalls – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

a. Kelly Fraser as .5 FTE Reading Recovery Teacher at Wawaloam School, effective August 28, 2007

6. Sabbaticals

a. Item pulled

C. Bills – August invoices in the amount of \$86,408.53; July 2007 Accruals in the amount of \$18,534.69.

D. Home School Approvals
End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – (1) August 16, 2007 Letter to the Superintendent from Paul Parker of the Providence Journal; (2) August 6, 2007 Letter to the Superintendent from David Abbott and the Superintendent's response letter to David Abbott

Member Bollengier moved to have item marked, Correspondence (1) subject; Letter to the Superintendent from the Providence Journal, moved to the next School Committee meeting in September - September 11th. Seconded by Member Munroe. Voted 6 – 0.

Monthly Status Reports – Superintendent – Clerk Coutcher referenced the new peanut law mentioned in the Superintendent's Status Report and requested that this topic be placed on the next regular meeting agenda for discussion.

In response to Member Bollengier's inquiry, Superintendent Geismar confirmed that this discussion can take place on September 11th, (after the start of school) since measures that need to take place will have already been put into place.

Superintendent Geismar left the meeting at this time, (7:22 p.m.).

Vice Chair Cicero said that the Superintendent is leaving the meeting in order to give the news media a statement regarding the legislation and what the district is doing to address it.

Curriculum – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding the Curriculum Status Report.

Special Education - In response to Member Bollengier's observation that the By-Laws of the EWG RI Local Advisory Committee provided to members may be incomplete and missing pages; Director of Special Education Maureen DeCrescenzo said that she will check and will make any necessary corrections for the next regular meeting.

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 4

NEW BUSINESS – Policies – Review and Adoption - #8604 – Student Travel - Amendment – Member Bollengier moved for acceptance of Policy #8604 – Student Travel – Amendment, as presented, with two amendments noted in the policy. Seconded by Member Walsh. Voted 6 – 0.

Member Bollengier asked for clarification that agenda item, V., B. Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Sabbatical Leave is tied into

consent agenda item, IV., 6., a. which was pulled for discussion. Vice Chair Cicero confirmed that both of these items will be pushed to the end of the meeting for discussion at the same time.

Comprehensive Guidance Discussion – Member Bollengier moved to defer the discussion on Ms. Boulé packet dealing with Comprehensive Guidance to the September 11, 2007 meeting to allow all members the opportunity to review the informational packet. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 6 – 0.

Metcalf HVAC Cleaning – Director of Administration Robert Ross gave an overview of his proposal to do a deep cleaning of the HVAC system at Metcalf School. He said that this project will be submitted for capital project state reimbursement, that this work will take approximately two weeks to complete, and that this work should be done during the winter break. He referenced the quote provided to members and said that this expensive endeavor will require that this project go out to bid.

Member Munroe moved to have Mr. Ross put a bid spec together for the HVAC System cleaning at Metcalf School. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher.

Member Bollengier said that this project should be done when the school is empty and that he would be opposed to having this work done while students are in attendance.

Voted 6 – 0.

Superintendent Geismar returned to the meeting at this time, (7:35 p.m.).

Transportation Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross explained that he has been working with Laidlaw and parents to resolve existing 2007/08 school year transportation issues. He gave an overview of each issue and probable remedies. Mr. Ross said that further resolution requires that the transportation subcommittee members, Members Maher and Bollengier, get involved in the resolution process. Consensus was that Members Maher and Bollengier will meet with Mr. Ross to address the transportation issues. Members and Administrators briefly discussed new RI General Law which specifies what constitutes a school bus and describes what a school bus should look like.

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 5

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Policies – Review and Adoption - #8607 – Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities – Including Athletics – Amendment – Member Bollengier moved to pull Policy #8607 –

Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities – Including Athletics – Amendment from tonight’s agenda. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 6 – 0.

#8506 – Suspension and Expulsion – Adoption – Clerk Coutcher moved to accept Policy #8506 – Suspension and Expulsion – Adoption as presented. Seconded by Member Walsh.

Member Bollengier commented that the changes in the language to this policy required a great deal of input and time and that Principal Boulé was very instrumental in the process.

Voted 6 – 0.

Jr. High School Assistant Principal Search – Superintendent Geismar gave members a brief update regarding the steps taken to form a search committee for the position of Jr. High School Assistant Principal. He said that he anticipates bringing forward search committee member names at the next regular School Committee meeting.

Director of Student Affairs Search – Superintendent Geismar gave members a brief update regarding the steps taken to form a search committee for the position of Sr. High School Director of Student Affairs. He said that he will bring search committee member names forward at the next regular School Committee meeting.

Bond Discussion – Superintendent Geismar referenced a letter received from the Town of West Greenwich indicating that the Town Council has appointed Robert Bollengier, Robert Butler, James Woloohojian, and John Pignataro to serve as the West Greenwich representatives on the School District Building Committee. Dr. Geismar said that Exeter Town Council President Calvin Ellis told him that Donald Staley will serve as the Exeter Building Committee representative and that Mr. Ellis will let him know who the community representatives will be once they are selected.

Legal Counsel Services – Superintendent Geismar read Senate Bill 461 - section G, which speaks to the issue of the School Committees' authority to retain independent legal counsel services as it may deem necessary and convenient. In response to Member Munroe's inquiry, Vice Chair Cicero confirmed that this item will be placed on the September 11, 2007 School Committee agenda for further discussion/consideration.

Metcalf Fire Alarm – Update – Director of Administration Robert Ross updated members on the status of the Metcalf fire alarm project. He said that after meeting today

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 6

with all parties involved in the installation process, it is anticipated

that the project will be

completed in time for the opening of school. Mr. Ross advised that if any components of the project are not in compliance by the start of school, fire watches will have to be posted. He said that all-in-all installers have done a great job on the project.

SAT Prep Course – Superintendent Geismar reported that an advertisement was placed for a math teacher and that he anticipates filling the instructor positions by the first week in September. The Superintendent will report back to the School Committee at its next regular meeting.

REPORTS/COMMENTS – Vice Chair Cicero reverted back to items pulled from the consent agenda.

Member Maher requested that consent agenda item, B., 6. a. Letter from Donna Lico requesting a sabbatical leave of absence from her position as Jr. High School Science Teacher, for second semester of the 2007 – 2008 school year, pending the approval of the Memorandum of Agreement with the EWGTA be pulled for discussion. And Member Munroe requested that Agenda Request Form #0005 (agenda item, V., B. Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Sabbatical Leave) also be pulled for discussion at the same time.

Superintendent Geismar gave a detailed overview of the

circumstances surrounding Ms. Lico's sabbatical leave request to date. Dr. Geismar said that Ms. Lico's request for a sabbatical leave was initially denied and a grievance was filed on her behalf by the EWG Teachers' Association. After reviewing and modifying areas of concern in the sabbatical proposal with Ms. Lico, Teachers' Association representatives, and Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley; the Superintendent said that he feels the sabbatical is worthy and will benefit Ms. Lico, her students, and the district. Dr. Geismar advised that a Memorandum of Agreement was reached with the Teachers' Association that will minimize the cost of the sabbatical to the district. The MOA will afford the district to employ a per diem substitute teacher to replace Ms. Lico during her sabbatical leave at a cost of \$9,000. The Superintendent said that if the leave is denied and goes to arbitration it would cost the district \$4,000 - \$5,000. Administrators answered members' clarifying questions. Director of Curriculum Nancy Daley confirmed that CBA language guarantees that Ms. Lico will return to work in the district for two full years following her leave. The Superintendent assured members that he will report back to the committee regarding the sabbatical and that accountability will be place.

Member Bollengier moved to approve, as recommended by the Superintendent, to grant a Sabbatical Leave of Absence for Donna Lico for second semester of the 07/08 school year and to accept and approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the Exeter-West Greenwich Teachers' Association. Seconded by Mary Walsh. Voted

5 – 1. Member Munroe voted no.

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 7

Clerk Coutcher requested consent agenda items, B., 1., a. Carmella Farrar as Special Education Director, Salary \$ 97,641; (Year 1 to be pro-rated for 10-months); effective September 1, 2007 and B., 1., b. Gwenn Spence as Assistant Special Education Director, Salary \$89,207; (Year 1 to be pro-rated for 10-months); contingent upon receipt of RIDE School Certificate and BCI, effective September 1, 2007 be pulled for discussion.

Superintendent Geismar asked members to approve the appointment of Carmella Farrar as Director of Special Education. He expressed that he is relaxed and confident with his recommendation and voiced his opinion that Carmella will do an excellent job as Special Education Director. He said that year one is a probationary period and an extended two-year contract will be offered based upon a performance evaluation.

Member Munroe moved to accept Carmella Farrar as Special Education Director. Seconded by Member Walsh.

Member Bollengier expressed his view that this position is one of the most difficult positions at the administration building. He said that

although he believes that, based on Gwenn Spence's background, the roles should be reversed and that Ms. Spence should be appointed as Special Education Director and Ms. Farrar as Assistant Special Education Director, after speaking with the Superintendent who expressed that he is very confident with his decision, that he is voting to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent. . He said that as a committee member he does not want to micromanage the district and has to place trust in the Superintendent's decision. Member Bollengier asked members to keep that in mind.

Voted 3 – 3. Clerk Coutcher, Member Maher, and Vice Chair Cicero voted no.

Clerk Coutcher moved to table, B., 1., a. and b. of the consent agenda to a Special Meeting; date to be determined. Seconded by Member Munroe.

Member Bollengier advised that the motion needs to be for the reconsideration to appoint Ms. Farrar.

Clerk Coutcher withdrew his motion.

Clerk Coutcher moved to table consent agenda item, B. I. b. to a Special Meeting; date to be determined and also to reconsider B. 1. a. at the same Special Meeting; date to be determined. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 – 0.

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH August 21, 2007
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 8

Member Bollengier moved that the full committee have a Special Meeting on August 28, 2007, for the purpose of two matters; the matter that Member Coutcher just moved in Open Session; Member Bollengier moved that the Special Meeting include an open discussion by the Director of Administration regarding Health Care Cost and issues for Administrators; Member Bollengier moved that the meeting include Executive Session for the purpose of providing an negotiation update – to meet with the full committee with an update on matters pending with the Teachers' Association, at 7:00 p. m. Seconded by Member Maher. Voted 6 – 0.

IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – Friday, August 24, 2007 – New Staff Training; Monday, August 27, 2007 – Teacher Orientation Day; Tuesday, August 28, 2007 – Professional Development Day; Wednesday, August 29, 2007 – First Day of School All Students; Monday, September 3, 2007 – Labor Day; Tuesday, September 11, 2007 – School Committee Meeting; Tuesday, September 25, 2007 – School Committee Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 AND RIGL 42-46-5 – Member Walsh moved to go into Executive Session at 8:43 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (a) (2) – Robert S. vs. Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District - Update. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 6 – 0.

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 8:43 p.m.

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to reconvene to Open Session. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher.
Voted 6 – 0 in favor.**

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 9:50 p.m.

A (5 – 1) vote was taken during Executive Session to decline the offer submitted by the lawyers of Robert S. Member Maher voting no.

ADJOURNMENT – Clerk Coutcher moved to adjourn at 9:50 p.m. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 0. Meeting adjourned 9:50 p.m.

**ROBIN CERIO
CLERK**